

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5**

DATE: January 5, 2007

SUBJECT: Reports of Significant Developments and Activities
Ending on December 29, 2006

FROM: Richard C. Karl, Director
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TO: Mary A. Gade
Regional Administrator

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The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities, other significant developments, and training/conferences:

SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Removal Action Memo Signed, Huffer's Garage Property, Prestolite Battery Superfund Site, Vincennes, Indiana

On December 19, 2006, the Region 5 Superfund Division signed an action memo to perform a time critical removal at the Huffer's Garage property, which is located adjacent to the Prestolite Battery Superfund site in Vincennes, Indiana. A determination was made that an imminent and substantial threat to public health or welfare or the environment was posed by lead contaminated soils on this property. This removal action will remediate approximately 6750 tons of lead contaminated soil, which will be stabilized in place and then excavated and disposed of in a licensed landfill. The removal action will be performed by Honeywell, Inc., the potentially responsible party at the site. An administrative order is currently being negotiated with Honeywell. It is expected that the removal will begin as soon as weather conditions permit.

Contact: Darryl Owens (312-886-7089)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Harper Woods Methane Release, Harper Woods, Michigan

On December 4, 2006, a construction company driving rods under an apartment complex struck a pocket of methane. Local fire and police evacuated four homes and two condo buildings due to methane levels as high as 100%. At the request of the Harper Woods Fire and Police Department, United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) On-Scene Coordinator Brian Kelly responded. Between December 4 and 7, U.S. EPA worked with the City of Harper Woods and contractors working for the owner to vent the gas above the apartment rooftop, relocated residents, and ensured a consultant was hired to address the post-emergency remediation.

Contact: Brian Kelly (734-692-7684)

TRAINING/CONFERENCES

Tug Seneca Grounding, Lake Superior, Grand Marais, Michigan

The Region 5 Regional Response Team (RRT) was convened on December 11, 2006, to discuss the issue of the grounded tugboat Seneca ("Seneca") and associated environmental risks from it. Attending the RRT meetings (via conference call) were representatives from United States Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. EPA, U.S. Department of Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Based on review of the situation from RRT members, the grounded vessel poses threats to several fish and protected bird breeding grounds. Options for dealing with the grounded vessel were discussed, with the option of towing the Seneca to a pier in order to complete the cleanup and eliminate any environmental impact from the grounded vessel deemed the most solution. On December 14, 2006, U.S. EPA informed the RRT that U.S. EPA supported the USCG contractor's plan to tow the Seneca to a pier and complete the cleanup. By way of background, the Seneca was being towed to Grand Marais, Michigan, by another tugboat on December 3, 2006, when it encountered severe weather. The ropes holding the Seneca broke free and it drifted away. It was discovered three days later, fifty (50) yards from shore near Grand Marais, Michigan. The USCG hired contractors to remove oil and hazardous wastes from

the Seneca, but inclement weather prevented them from safely removing all materials from the ship.

Contact: Jason El-Zein (734-692-7661)

Spills of National Significance 07 Ohio Valley/Evansville Venue Initial Planning Conference, Louisville, Kentucky

On December 12, 2006, a Spills of National Significance (SONS) 07 Initial Planning Conference for the Evansville, Indiana, venue was conducted on December 12, 2006, in Louisville, Kentucky. The purpose of this meeting was to refine the exercise objectives and develop the Master Sequence of Events List for the first two days of the exercise. Sheila Calovich (ERB #1) attended this meeting, along with representatives from USCG Atlantic Area, USCG District 8, USCG Sector Ohio Valley, Caesars Casino, Marathon Oil, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, FBI, Kentucky Civil Air Patrol, and Evansville Marine. The Mid Planning Conference for the Evansville venue is scheduled for mid-January 2007.

Contact: Sheila Calovich (312-353-1505)

Superfund Reuse Presentation, Director of the National Engineering Environmental Research Institute, Nagpur, India

On December 18, 2006, Region 5's Superfund Reuse Coordinator met with Dr. DeVotta, Director, National Environmental Engineering Research Institute in India to present information about a project that utilizes landfill gas to create electrical and heat energy. Scott Subler, President, and Sharad Deshpande, Executive Vice President, Environment Credit Corporation, accompanied Dr. DeVotta and learned about a Cogeneration project at the H.O.D. Landfill in Antioch, Illinois. Dr. DeVotta was interested in methane gas use from landfills and this project is a great example of how landfill gas is used to power 12 micro turbines which produce electricity and heat the High School in Antioch, Illinois. Also discussed was the collaborative effort between the one Potentially Responsible Party (PRP), the School District, U.S. EPA, the Village and Township of Antioch, which provided much needed athletic fields and educational

opportunities to study physics, chemistry, economics and environmental management.

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